

## **Linda Booth**



I was told I had polio in the summer of 1952 when I was 18 months old. I had problems with my breathing, ran a high fever, and was paralyzed on my right side. My right leg and hip were the areas that I have problems now.

I was treated at home because Burge hospital here in Springfield was overloaded with cases and mine was considered mild to what was in the hospital. The doctor came to the house a couple times a week to check on me; and, if mom and dad thought I needed to see him other times, they met him at his office after hours. I do have an older sister Nancy who did not get polio. She is 6 years older than I and, while she remembers some of it, she does not remember much of it. My Dad's father would come over in the morning after dad left for work and would either take Nancy or would take care of me so that mom could go do her errands or if she needed to do something with Nancy do that.

I take it that nothing was ever told to my Aunts and Uncles that lived here. Most of them had children, and mom and dad didn't tell them. My Aunt Edna and Uncle Paul seem to have been the only ones told and that was because they had no children and they would come over and help when they could by taking Nancy.

I walked with a limp until I was about 5 or 6 then seemed to grow out of it. In school I never could run like other kids and have always had a problem of being short of breath at times. My parents decided since I was so young when I had it that there was no need in telling about it. I was told that I cried until I was 3 and they didn't know why.

I was about 30 when I found out about the polio. My grandmother was talking about mom's three kids and how she thought I would have been the one that would not have made it. I asked why she thought that since I thought that I was the healthiest of the three since my sister has asthma and my brother who is 4 year young also has asthma. She then told me the story of the polio and how her and grandpa helped mom and dad during that time.

Mother and I had several talks after I started having trouble with my right leg (it became weaker and would hurt and I would have the leg jump and wake John up at night). Mom had heard about Post Polio and wondered then if that might be what was going on. But as

always, she said that I needed to exercise and work hard on keeping those muscles in shape and that was what I did. I worked as a bank teller for 15 years lifting heavy bags of coin around all day and never thought anything about it.

Then, in 1997 while I was working as a Vet Tech for Dr. Trokey, my right leg started to give away with me. My right arm started getting weaker. Little 20 and 30 lb dogs that I was lifting by myself I was getting that I just couldn't lift them anymore. I started going to Dr. to find out what was going on. They ran all kinds of test and couldn't find anything. They thought that it was a disk in my back nothing showed up. Then in 98, I was finally diagnosed with PPS.

I tried very hard to get mom to talk about that time in 52, but she just really never wanted to relive it; and now everyone that knew much are gone.

I'm so glad that I found this loving group of friends and have learned so much from each and every one of you.

